

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 049214
ORIGIN NEA-10

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DRAFTED BY IO/UNP:RAPECK/NEA/ARN:MDRAPER:PDW
APPROVED BY P - MR HABIB (S/S 7706060)
IO:JABAKER
NEA:ALATHER
S/S-MR SHANKLE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 049214

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNSC, IS, LE, SY, XF

SUBJECT: SOUTHERN LEBANON

REF: (A) BEIRUT 865, (B) BEIRUT 898, (C) STATE 46806

1. WE HAVE GIVEN CAREFUL CONSIDERATION TO YOUR OPTIONS
(REF A) FOR DEALING WITH THE DANGEROUS SITUATION IN SOUTH
LEBANON. WE ARE CONVINCED THE ISRAELIS WILL NOT RPT NOT
ACCEPT A SYRIAN PRESENCE SOUTH OF THEIR PRESENT POSITIONS.
WE THEREFORE ARE READY TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF A UN
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PAGE 02 STATE 049214

PEACE-KEEPING OPERATION.

2. WHEN BOUTROS RETURNS FROM CAIRO, YOU SHOULD EXPLAIN
THAT WE WOULD BE PREPARED TO EXPLORE THE IDEA OF A UN
PEACE-KEEPING FORCE IN THE SOUTH WITH THEM, MAKING THE
FOLLOWING POINTS:

-- THE CONCEPT WOULD HAVE A CHANCE OF SUCCESS ONLY IF LEBANON CAN DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING WITH PLO/FATAH AND THE MARONITE MILITIAS THAT THEY WOULD ACCEPT A UN MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE SOUTH AND COOPERATE WITH ITS ACTIVITIES. WE BELIEVE THE LEBANESE SHOULD BEGIN SEEKING THIS UNDERSTANDING, AND BEFORE MOVING FURTHER WITH THE CONCEPT.

-- IN THE MEANTIME WE WILL SOUND OUT THE ISRAELIS AS REGARDS THEIR GENERAL REACTIONS TO SUCH A STEP; WE WILL NOT, HOWEVER, AT THIS STAGE ENCOURAGE THEM TO SUPPORT OR ACQUIESCE IN SUCH A MEASURE. WE WILL PASS THEIR PRELIMINARY REACTIONS ON TO THE LEBANESE.

-- AFTER OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS HAVE TAKEN THESE PRELIMINARY SOUNDINGS, WE MIGHT EXCHANGE VIEWS ON WHAT SHOULD BE DONE NEXT.

-- IT MUST BE UNDERSTOOD THAT, IN THE END, THE LEBANESE THEMSELVES MUST DECIDE WHETHER A UN PEACE-KEEPING FORCE WOULD BE USEFUL IN EASING THEIR PROBLEMS IN THE SOUTH. THE U. RETAINS AN OPEN MIND ABOUT THE CONCEPT, BUT, AT THIS STAGE, DOES NOT WISH TO OFFER ANY ENCOURAGEMENT OR DISCOURAGEMENT.

3. FYI: IN OUR PRELIMINARY THINKING, WE FORESEE NO SERIOUS TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES IN QUICKLY ESTABLISHING A PEACE-KEEPING FORCE WHICH MIGHT HELP STABILIZE THE SITUATION IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. THE TROOPS COULD POSSIBLY BE DRAWN INITIALLY FROM EXISTING UN PEACE-KEEPING FORCES
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PAGE 03 STATE 049214

(UNEF, UNDOF AND UNTSO--AND POSSIBLY UNFICYP). WE WOULD ENVISAGE A FORCE WHICH WOULD COMBINE POLICE FUNCTIONS WITH THOSE OF MILITARY OBSERVERS IN A MISSION SIMILAR TO THAT OF UNFICYP. SUCH A FORCE WOULD BE DIRECTED TOWARD STABILIZING THE SITUATION WITHIN LEBANON, NOT PATROLLING THE INTERNATIONAL FRONTIER, AND ONE OF ITS PRINCIPAL LONG-RANGE GOALS COULD BE FACILITATING THE RETURN OF CENTRAL LEBANESE GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY TO THE AREA. END FYI.

4. FOR USUN: YOU SHOULD BRIEF BRIAN URQUHART ON OUR EXCHANGES WITH THE LEBANESE AND ASK FOR HIS VIEWS. YOU SHOULD STRESS THAT WE BELIEVE THE LEAD IN THIS MATTER MUST COME FROM THE LEBANESE THEMSELVES AND THAT WE HAVE NO DESIRE TO GET OUT IN FRONT.
CHRISTOPHE

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NNN

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